"Our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into the Faith and leave not in our hearts, rancour (or sense of injury) against those who have believed Our Lord! Thou art indeed Full of Kindness, Most Merciful"

All praise is due to Allah, Subhanahu wa ta'ala, the Sustainer of the Worlds

The Description of the Prophet's Prayer

The Prayer of the Prophet Described with the Islamic Ruling Regarding Congregational Prayer

Abdullaziz Bin Abdullah Bin Baz

Daar al-Watan Publishing House

Made By TheVista

The Prayer of the Prophet Described with the Islamic Ruling Regarding Congregational Prayer

Prepared By:

Shaykh 'Abdul-'Azeez ibn Baaz

Translated by a team of specialists under the supervision of the publisher

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All praise is due to Allaah Alone; may He send salutations and exalt the mention of the seal of all Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muhammad, his family and all his companions.

This is a brief booklet which describes the Prophet's prayer and is presented to all Muslims so that they may strive hard to imitate him when performing their Prayers, for he (ﷺ) said: ***"Perform your Prayers as you have seen me performing them."*** *(Bukhaari)*

The following is a description of the Prophet's prayer:

- First, one should perform a complete and proper ablution, as commanded by Allaah; He says that which means: ***"O you who believe! When you intend to perform prayer, wash your faces and your forearms up to the elbows, wipe (wet hands over) your heads, and (wash) your feet up to the ankles."*** *(Al-Maa'idah:6)* The Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***"Prayer without ablution is invalid."*** *(Muslim)* He (ﷺ) also said when teaching a man who improperly performed his prayer: ***"Perform ablution properly and completely before you stand for prayer."***
- Then, one should turn ones face and body towards the *Qiblah* (i.e., the *Ka'bah*) intending in

the heart to perform the prayer which one wishes to perform, whether it is an obligatory prayer or a supererogatory one. In all cases, one should not utter their intention, for it was not practiced by the Prophet (ﷺ) nor was it the practice of his companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, to utter their intention for prayers. One should place an object in front of themselves to obstruct people from passing in front of them during their prayers. Directing oneself towards the *Qiblah* is a precondition for every prayer, except in exceptional situations, whether the person is leading the prayer, in the congregation, or praying alone.

- One should utter the initial *'Allaahu Akbar'* (Allaah is the Greatest) and look downwards to the place of prostration.

- One should raise one's hands parallel to his shoulders or earlobes, while uttering this *'Allaahu Akbar'*.

- Place one's hands on the chest, having the right hand over the left hand and left wrist, as in the *Hadeeth* narrated by *Waa'il ibn Hijr* and *Halb At-Taa'i,* may Allaah be pleased with them, describing the prophet's prayer.

- It is advisable to recite any opening supplication such as the one narrated by *Abu Hurayrah* (رضي الله عنه):

"Allaahumma baa'id bayni wa bayna khataayaya kamaa baa'atta bayna al-mashriqi wa al-maghrib, Allaahumma naqqini min khataayaya kamaa yanaqqath-thawbu al-abyadhu minad-danas, Allaahumma ighsilni min khataayaaya bil-maa'i wath-thalji wal-barad *(O Allaah! Distance me from my sins as You have distanced the east from the west; O Allaah! Cleanse me of my sins as a white garment is cleansed from dirt. O Allaah! Wash off my sins with water, snow and hail)***."*** *(Bukhaari)*

- One may say instead: ***"Subhaanaka Allaahumma wa bihamdika wa tabarakasmuk wa ta'aalaa jad-duk wa laa ilaaha ghayruk*** *(How perfect You are O Allaah! Blessed be Your name, lofty is Your position and none has the right to be worshipped except You)***,"*** or any other supplication from the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ); and it is better to alternate in reciting different supplications to be closer to the *Sunnah* After that, one should say: ***"A'oothu billaahi mina ash-Shaytaani ar-Rajeem*** *(I seek the protection of Allaah against the accursed Satan)***."*** Then say: ***"Bismillaah ar-Rahmaan ar-Raheem*** *(In the name of Allaah the Most Merciful the Most Gracious)***,"*** then recite the *Faatihah***,** because

the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***"Prayers without reciting the Faatihah are invalid."***

- One should loudly say *'Aameen'* after finishing their recitation of the *Faatihah* if the prayer is to be said loudly, and whisper it in the silent prayers, then recite verses from medium sized chapters of the *Qur'aan* in the *Dhuhr* (noon), *`Asr* (afternoon), and *`Ishaa'* (night) prayers. As for the *Fajr* (dawn) prayer, then one is recommended to recite from a long chapter of the *Qur'aan*. One may alternate in *Maghrib* (sunset prayer) between the long chapters and the mid-sized chapters. It is recommended that the duration for the *'Asr* prayer is shorter than that of *Dhuhr*.

- Bow in *Rukoo'* raising your hands parallel to the shoulders or earlobes while saying *Allaahu Akbar*, levelling your head and back and placing your hands with the fingers spread on your knees. Whilst bowing with tranquillity, one should say: ***"Subhaana rabbiyal 'adheem*** *(Praise is to our Lord, the All-Mighty)**,"*** three times at least. It is advisable to say in addition while bowing: ***"Subhaanaka Allaahumma rabbana wa bihamdika Allaahumma ighfirli*** *(Exalted be You O Allaah, Our Lord, and praise and thanks be to You; O Allah, forgive me my sins)**."***

- One should raise his head from bowing while raising the hands parallel to the shoulders or ear-lobes and say, whether he is leading the prayer or praying alone: ***"Sami'a Allaahu liman Hamidah** (Allaah listens to him who thanks Him)**."*** While resuming the standing position, one should say: ***"Rabbanaa walaka al-Hamd, mil'a as-Samaawaati wa mil'a al-Ardh, wa maa baynahumaa, wa mil'a maa shi'ta min shay'in ba'd** (Our Lord, for You is all praise, an abundant beautiful and blessed praise. The heavens, the earth, and all between them are abundant with Your praise)**."*** One may also add: ***"Ahl-ath-thanaa'i wal-majd; ahaqqu maa qaala-l'abd, wa kullunaa laka 'abd, Allaahumma laa maani'a limaa a'tayt wa laa mu'tiya limaa mana't wa laa yanfa'u dhal-jaddi minkal-jadd** (O Possessor of Praise and Majesty! The truest thing a slave has said (of You) and we are all Your slaves. O Allaah! None can prevent what You have willed to bestow and none can bestow what You willed to prevent, and no wealth or majesty can benefit anyone as from You is all majesty)*, and if one is praying behind the *Imaam,* they should say when rising up: ***"Our Lord, for You is all the praise…"*** It is recommended for everybody to place their hands on

their chests after *Rukoo'* to coincide with the *Sunnah.*

- Prostrate saying *Allaahu Akbar*. Ones knees should touch the ground before their hands, but if one cannot, then he may place his hands first. Ones fingers (close together) and toes should be pointed towards the *Qiblah* and the hands should be stretched. In prostration, the worshipper should allow only these seven body parts to touch the ground: The forehead and nose (which count as one body part for this purpose), both hands, both knees and the base of the toes of both feet. One should then say: ***"Subhaana Rabbiyal A'laa** (Glorified is my Lord, the Most high),"* at least three times. It is also recommended to say: ***"Subhaanaka Allaahumma Rabbanaa wa Bihamdika Allaahumma ighfirli*** *(Exalted be You O Allaah, Our Lord, and praise and thanks be to You; O Allah, forgive me my sins)."*
- It is recommended to exert extra effort in supplications at this time, for the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***"The closest the slave is to his lord is while he is prostrating."*** *(Muslim)* One should then ask their Lord for prosperity both in this worldly life and in the Hereafter for themselves and other Muslims in both obligatory and supererogatory

prayers. While prostrating, one should neither bring their upper-arms close to their sides, place their abdomen too close to their thighs, nor their thighs too close to their legs. Ones forearms [and elbows] should be raised up from the ground, for the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***"Prostrate properly, and do not stretch your forearms on the ground as dogs do."*** *(Bukhaari)*

- One should raise their head from prostration saying *Allaahu Akbar* and lay the [outside of the] left foot flat on the ground [pointing towards the right] and sit on it, keeping the right foot upright [with the base of the toes firm on the ground, pointing towards the Qiblah] and the hands on the thighs and knees. He should then say: ***"Allaahumma ighfirli, warhamni, wahdini, warzuqni, wajburni, wa'aafini*** *(O Allaah! Forgive me, have mercy upon me, guide me, grant me sustenance, console me, and grant me good health)****."*** One should be tranquil during this pause, until each of his joints settle in their original position (i.e., before prostration). Then, he should prostrate again saying *'Allaahu Akbar'* and repeat during the second prostration what he did in the first.

- One should raise his head from prostration while saying *Allaahu Akbar* taking a pause similar to

the pause between the two prostrations; this is called the 'sitting of rest'. It is recommended to perform this pause, but there is no harm if one does not do this; there are no special supplications to be saidduring this pause.

- One should then rise up and stand taking support on his knees, but if he cannot, then one may take support on the ground using both hands. One should then recite the *Faatihah* and some other portions from the *Qur'aan* and do as one did in the first *Rak`ah*. Those who pray behind the *Imaam* should not race with him [by preceding him] in the actions of prayer but should move after the *Imaam* moves, or when they hear the last word which the *Imaam* says, for the Prophet (ﷺ) warned against racing or even coinciding with him saying: ***"The Imaam is to be followed precisely, so do not differ from his actions; if he says 'Allaahu Akbar', say the same after him. If he bows down, bow down after him. If he says 'Sami` Allaahu liman hamidah', say 'Rabbanaa wa lakal-hamd'; and if he prostrates, prostrate after him."*** *(Bukhaari & Muslim)*

- If the prayer consists of two *Rak`ah* (*i.e., if it is* the *Fajr*, *'Eed*, [supererogatory,] or *Jumu`ah* prayer), one should sit after the second prostration, with the right foot upright, sitting on the left

foot laid down, placing the right hand on the right thigh [as he did in the sitting between the two prostrations]; all the fingers should be closed in a fist except the index finger which is to be used to point while supplicating as a sign of ones Monotheistic belief. The left hand is to be placed on ones left thigh and knee. If one keeps both the small and ring finger closed, while rounding the thumb and middle finger into the shape of a ring, and uses the index finger to point whilst supplicating then this is acceptable too, for it has been reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) had practiced both ways, thus, it is advisable for one to alternate between the two.

- One should then recite the *Tashahhud* while sitting, which is: ***"At-tahiyaatu lillaahi was-salawaatu wattayyibaat, assalaamu 'alayka ayyuhannabiyyu wa rahmat-ullaahi wa barakaatuh. Assalaamu 'alaynaa wa 'alaa 'ibaadillaahi As-Saaliheen; Ash-hadu allaa ilaaha illallaahu wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa rasooluh. Allaahumma salli 'alaa Muhammad wa 'alaa aali Muhammad, kamaa sallayata 'alaa Ibraaheem wa aali Ibraaheem, Innaka Hameedun Majeed. Wa baarik 'alaa Muhammad wa 'alaa aali Muhammad kamaa baarakta 'alaa Ibraaheem wa aali Ibraaheem.***

Innaka Hameedun Majeed *(Glorification is for Allaah, all acts of worship and good deeds are from Him. May Allaah send salutations, mercy and blessings upon the Prophet, Peace be upon us and on all righ eous slaves of Allaah. I testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, and I testify that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger. O Allaah! Exalt the mention of Muhammad and his family just as You exalted the mention of Ibraaheem and his family. Verily, You are full of Praise and Majesty. O Allaah, send blessings upon Muhammad and upon the family of Muhammad, just as You sent blessings upon Ibraaheem and upon the family of Ibraaheem, verily, You are full of Praise and Majesty)."* Then say: ***"Allahumma inni a'oothu bika min 'adhaabi jahaanam, wa min 'adhaabil qabr, wa min fitnatil mahyaa wal mamaat, wa min sharril Maseehid Dajjaal*** *(O Allaah! I take refuge in You from the punishment of Hell, the torment of the grave, the tribulations of life and death, and the evil affliction of the Antichrist."* Then one may ask Allaah for prosperity in this life and the Hereafter and supplicate to Him for the good of his parents and other Muslims. This is to be done during any obligatory or supererogatory prayers, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said when he taught *ibn Mas'ood* (رضي الله عنه) how to recite the *Ta-*

shahhud ***"One may choose any supplication he wishes to invoke Allaah."*** Then one concludes the prayer by turning his face to the right and then to the left, saying: ***"As-Salaamu 'Alaykum wa Rahmatullaah*** *(Salutations and mercy of Allaah be upon you)****,"*** after each turn.

- If it was a prayer which consists of three *Rak`ah* (*Maghrib*), or four *Rak`ah* (*Dhuhr*, *'Asr* or *`Ishaa'*); one should stand up after reciting the *Tashahhud* and raise their hands parallel to their shoulders saying *Allaahu Akbar*. One should then place his hands over his chest as it has been explained earlier and recite only the *Faatihah.* There is no harm in adding some other portions of the *Qur'aan* to this once in a while, during the third or fourth *Rak`ah* of *Dhuhr* prayer, for this was reported in the *Sunnah* as in the narration of *Abu Sa'eed* (رضي الله عنه). One may also stand [for the third *rak`ah*] without reciting the second part of the *Tashahhud* [which begins with *"Allahumma salli 'alaa Muhammad"*], as it is something which is only recommended and not obligatory in the first *Tashahhud*
- After the third *Rak`ah* of *Maghrib* prayer and the fourth *Rak`ah* of *Dhuhr*, *'Asr* and *'Ishaa* prayers, one recites the full *Tashahhud* and takes refuge in Allaah from the four things [the punishment

of Hell, the torment of the grave, the tribulations of life and death, and the evil affliction of the Antichrist]. He should exert extra effort in supplication [after that], such as the supplication of the Prophet (ﷺ): ***"Rabbanaa aatinaa fid-Dunyaa hasanah, wa fil aakhirati hasanah, wa qinaa 'adhaaba an-Naar*** *(Our Lord! Give us in this world (that which is) good and in the Hereafter (that which is) good and protect us from the punishment of the Fire)***."*** *Anas* (رضي الله عنه) said: *"The Prophet* (ﷺ) *used to say this supplication in most of his prayers."* One should sit having his right foot upright [as the other sittings], but [this time] he should rest upon on [the left side of] his left thigh, placing his left foot under the right leg [which is propped up as in the other sittings]. Then the prayer should be concluded by saying: ***"As-Salamu alaykum wa Rahmatullaah*** *(Salutations and mercy and Allaah are upon you)***,"*** while turning first to the right and then while turning to the left.

- After finishing the prayers, it is recommended to ask for Allaah's forgiveness thrice [by saying ***"astaghfirullah"***] and then say*:* ***"Allahumma anta as-Salaam wa minka as-Salaam, tabaarakta yaa Dhal-Jalaali wal-Ikraam*** *(O Allaah, You are free from all defects, and from You*

is all peace, You are blessed, O Possessor of majesty and Honour).” Then say: ***“Laa ilaaha illa Allahu wahdahu laa shareeka lah, lahul-Mulku wa lahul-Hamd, wa Huwa ‘alaa kulli shay’in Qadeer. Laa hawla wa laa quwwata ilaa billaah. Allahumma laa maani’a limaa a’tayt, wa laa mu’tiya lima mana’t, wa laa yanfa’u dhal-jaddi minkal-jadd. Laa ilaaha illallaah, wa laa na’budi ilaa iyyaa, lahun-ni’matu wa lahul-fadl, wa lahuth-thanaa’ ul-hasan, laa ilaaha illa Allah, mukhliseena la-hud-deena wa law karihal-kaafiroon.*** *(None has the right to be worshipped except Allaah alone, without partner. To Him belong sovereignty and praise, and He is over all things omnipotent. There is neither might nor power except with Allaah. None can prevent what You have willed to bestow and none can bestow what You have willed to prevent, and no wealth or majesty can benefit anyone, as from You is all wealth and majesty. None has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, and we worship none except Him. For Him is all favours, grace, and glorious praise. None has the right to be worshipped except Allaah and we are sincere in faith and devotion to Him, although the disbelievers detest this).”*

- Exalt Allaah thirty-three times by saying ***"Subhana Allaah"***; Praise Him thirty-three times by saying ***"Al-Hamdulillaah";*** and also say ***"Allaahu Akbar"*** thirty-three times. Then, complete the hundredth by saying once: ***"Laa ilaaha illallaahu wahdahu laa shareeka lah, lahul-Mulk wa lahul-Hamd, wa huwa 'alaa kulli shay'in Qadeer*** *(None has the right to be worshipped except Allaah alone, without partner. To Him belong sovereignty and praise, and He is over all things omnipotent)***."***

- Recite the verse of the throne *(Aayatul-Kursi),* then the Surahs *Al-Ikhlaas, Al-Falaq,* and *An-Naas* [after each prayer]. It is recommended to recite these three Surahs thrice after the *Fajr* and the *Maghrib* prayer, as the Prophet (ﷺ) did. It is also recommended to recite ten times after these two prayers: ***"Laa ilaaha illallaahu wahdahu laa shareeka lah, lahul-Mulk wa lahul-Hamd, yuyhi wa yumeet, wa huwa 'alaa kulli shay'in Qadeer*** *(None has the right to be worshipped except Allaah alone, without partner. To Him belong sovereignty and praise, He gives life and causes death, and He is over all things omnipotent)***."***

- If one was the *Imaam* leading the prayer, he should turn towards the congregation and face

them after asking Allaah's forgiveness three times and saying : ***"Allahumma anta as-Salaam wa minka as-Salaam, tabaarakta yaa Dhal-Jalaali wal-Ikraam."*** Then he should recite all the above mentioned supplications.

- It is recommended for every Muslim (male or female) to pray a total of twelve *Rak`ah* of supererogatory prayers daily: Four *Rak`ah* before *Dhuhr* prayer and two after it; two after the *Maghrib* prayer; two after the *`Ishaa* prayer and two before the *Fajr* prayer. These are the supererogatory prayers which the Prophet (ﷺ) always prayed when he was not travelling. During his travels, he would only offer the two supererogatory *Rak`ah* before the *Fajr* prayer in addition to the *Witr* (odd numbered) prayer (after the *`Ishaa* prayer). We have a good example in him (ﷺ) to follow, as Allaah says what means: ***"Indeed in the Messenger of Allaah (Muhammad ﷺ) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the Meeting with) Allaah and the Last Day, and remembers Allaah much."*** *(Al-Ahzaab:21)* The Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***"Perform your Prayers as you have seen me performing them."***

- It is best to perform these twelve at home, but there is no harm in performing them in the

mosque, for the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***"The best of the Prayers are those which are performed in ones home, except for the obligatory prayers (which should be performed inside the mosque)."*** *(Bukhaari)*

- The fulfilment of these supererogatory prayers is a means for attaining Paradise. *Umm Habeebah* (﵂) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***"Allaah will build a house in Paradise for any Muslim who prays twelve supererogatory Rak`ah every day (and night)."*** *(Muslim)*
- In addition, it is also recommended to pray four supererogatory *Rak`ah* before the *'Asr* prayer, two before the *Maghrib* prayer and two before the *`Ishaa'* prayer, for the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***"May Allaah be merciful to the one who performs four Rak`ah before 'Asr."*** *(Ahmad, Abu Daawood, Tirmithi & Ibn Khuzaymah) He* (ﷺ) *also said*: ***"Pray two Rak`ah between each Adhaan (the call for prayer) and Iqaamah (the call to start the prayer),"*** and after saying this three times, he said: ***"…for the one who wishes to pray it."*** *(Bukhaari)*
- It is also recommended to pray four supererogatory *Rak`ah* before and after *Dhuhr* because the Prophet (ﷺ) said as narrated by *Umm Habeebah* (﵂): ***"Allaah will make the Fire forbidden for***

he who performs four Rak`ah before and after Thuhr." *(Ahmad)*

The Obligation of Congregational Prayer for Men

I was informed that many men take lightly the issue of performing their obligatory prayer with the congregation, giving the excuse that they follow those scholars who adopt a lenient opinion regarding this issue. Therefore, it is incumbent upon me to clarify the great danger of this, for a Muslim should not take lightly a matter which Allaah has given great importance to in His Book, and the Prophet (ﷺ) in his *Sunnah*

Allaah frequently addressed the issue of the establishment of prayers in His Book and emphasized its importance. He commanded Muslims to maintain them and perform them in congregation, and informed us that taking them lightly is a characteristic of the hypocrites. Allaah says that which means: ***"Guard strictly (five obligatory) the prayers especially the middle (i.e. the best prayer `Asr). And stand before Allaah with obedience [and do not***

speak to others during the prayers].” *(Al-Baqarah:238)*

Furthermore, how could it possibly be known if someone maintains the performance of their prayers if they do not perform it with the congregation? Allaah says that which means: ***“And be steadfast in prayer; practice regular charity; and bow down your heads with those who bow down (during prayer).”*** *(Al-Baqarah:43)* This verse is an evidence obligating the performance of prayer in congregation. If the objective behind the verse was only to command people to perform their prayers without the congregation, then the verse would not have concluded by saying at the end of the verse that which means: ***“…and bow down your heads with those who bow down (during prayer),”*** *(Al Baqarah:43)* for Allaah commanded the establishment of prayer at the beginning of that very verse.

Allaah also says that which means: ***“When you (Muhammad ﷺ) are among them, and lead them in prayer, let one group of them stand in prayer with you taking their arms with them, when they finish their prostration let them take their positions in the rear and let the other party come up which has not prayed, and let them pray with you taking precaution.”*** *(An-Nisaa’:102)* If Allaah commanded the performance of congregational prayer during the

time of war, then how much more so is it obligatory during times of peace? If anyone were to be excused then surely it would be those in the front line ready to combat the enemy and are endangered by their attack? But since they were not allowed to pray alone, it becomes clear that Muslim men are obliged to perform prayer with the congregation without exception.

The Prophet (ﷺ) warned against neglecting the congregational prayer saying: ***"I swear by Him in Whose hand is my soul, I was about to order that firewood be gathered, then order that the Adhaan for prayer be made, order a man to lead people in prayer, then go to those men who do not attend the congregation and burn their houses."*** (*Bukhaari & Muslim*)

Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) said: *"During our time, only a sick person or hypocrite whose hypocrisy was well known would miss the congregational prayers. I saw many in stances of a man brought to attend prayer while being supported by two men until he was placed in the line of worshipers." (Muslim)*

Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) said: *"Let he who would like to meet Allaah tomorrow (the Day of Resurrection) as a Muslim maintain performing the obligatory prayers where they are proclaimed (i.e., inside the mosque), for indeed Allah legislated for your*

Prophet (ﷺ) traditions of guidance, and indeed Prayers are from the traditions that leads to guidance. If you pray like those who abandon the congregation in their homes do, then you would abandon the way of your Prophet (ﷺ), and if you abandon the way of your Prophet (ﷺ) you will be misguided. Whenever a man performs ablution properly, then he heads towards any mosque, Allaah will grant one reward for each step he takes, elevate him a rank higher, and eradicate one of his sins. During our time, only a hypocrite whose hypocrisy was well known would miss the congregational prayers, and I saw many instances of a man brought to attend prayer while being supported by two men until he was placed in the line of worshipers. Each of you has a place for prayer in his home (to offer supererogatory prayers, and for women)." (Muslim)

Also, the Prophet (ﷺ) did not permit a blind man to perform prayer in his home. The narration relates that a blind man once came to the Prophet (ﷺ) seeking his concession to be absent from the congregational prayer. The Prophet (ﷺ) first gave him a concession, but just as the man was about to leave, the Prophet (ﷺ) called him and asked: ***"Do you hear the Adhaan?"*** The man replied: "*Yes.*" So the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***"Then respond (by coming to prayer)."*** *(Muslim)*

There are many other narrations which confirm the obligation of performing prayers with the congregation in the house of Allaah where the *Adhaan* is proclaimed. It is mandatory upon a Muslim to pay attention to this issue and advise his family, neighbours and all other Muslims with it as a way of adhering to the command of Allaah and His Messenger (ﷺ),as a way of refraining from what the Messenger (ﷺ) warned against, and as a way to clear oneself from one of the most dispraised characteristics of the hypocrites - laziness in performing the congregational prayer.

Allaah says that which means: ***"The Hypocrites think they are fooling Allaah but He is fooling them: when they stand up to pray, they stand with laziness. (They) sway between this and that, belonging neither to these nor to those; and he whom Allaah sends astray, you will not find for him a way (to the truth -Islaam)."*** *(An-Nisaa':142-143)*

Abandoning prayer with the congregation is one of the main reasons behind one totally abandoning the performance of prayer, and it is known that total abandonment of prayer is misguidance and an act of disbelief which takes a person out of the fold of Islaam. *Jaabir* (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***"Between a person and him becoming a disbeliever is the abandonment of prayer,"*** *(Muslim)* He also

said: ***"The pledge between us and them is the (establishment of) prayer, so whosoever abandons it becomes a disbeliever."*** There are many verses from the *Qur'aan* and narrations from the *Sunnah* indicating the greatness of the congregational prayer and its position, as well as warning against abandoning it.

It is mandatory upon every Muslim to maintain the establishment of prayer on time as Allaah legislated, to perform it with the congregation as an act of obedience to Allaah and His Messenger (ﷺ), and to protect himself from the wrath of Allaah.

When the truth prevails and its evidences become obvious, it is not permissible for anyone to stray from it to the opinion of any scholar or person, due to the saying of Allaah which means: ***"O you who believe! Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allaah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allaah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination."*** *(An-Naas':59)* Allaah also says that which means: ***"Let those who differ from his (i.e., the Prophet's ﷺ) command beware, lest some trial befall them, or a painful torment afflict them."*** *(An-Noor: 63)*

The benefits of the congregational prayer are very clear, and among the most obvious are that people meet and get to know one another, help each other to enjoin good and forbid evil, encourage those who neglect its performance at the correct times, teach the illiterate religious knowledge, enrage the hypocrites, express the rituals of Islaam between people, call people to the religion of Allaah, as well as many other benefits.